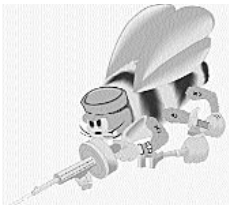


57 years of 'can do'



Continued from A-1

CB-5).

The Seabees' origins date back to the aftermath of the December 7th, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. However, the concept for using Sailors to build shore-based facilities is centuries old and can be traced back to the ancient Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans. American seamen were first employed in large numbers for major shore construction during the War of 1812, when the crew of USS Essex, commanded by Capt. David Porter, constructed a shore facility on Nukuhiva Island in the South Pacific, to use as a base of operations to prepare his squadron for battle against the British.

Fort Madison, as the base was called, included a house for Porter, a house for the other officers, a cooper's shop, a sail loft, a bake shop, a guard house, a simple medical dispensary, a stores building, an open-shed shelter for the Marine sentries, a rudimentary dock, and ramps to haul the ships high onto the beach. While this construction was underway, some unfriendly natives occasionally attacked, and the Americans had to lay down their tools, take up their weapons, and defend what they were building. Once of the seaman involved in the base construction was 12-year-old David Glasgow Farragut, Porter's foster son and a midshipman assigned to the Essex.

More than a century later, after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the use of civilian labor in war zones became impractical. Under international law civilians were not permitted to resist enemy military attack. Resistance meant summary execution as guerrillas. The Navy needed a militarized Naval Construction Force to build advance bases in war zones.

Rear Adm. Ben Moreell got authority from the Bureau of Navigation [present day Bureau of Naval Personnel] to recruit men from the construction trades for assignment to a Naval Construction Regiment composed of three Naval Construction Battalions on March 5, 1942 - the birth of the Seabees. Moreell personally furnished them with their official motto: Construiamus, Batuimus — "We Build, We Fight."

Today's Seabees cite a variety of reasons for joining the construction force. Some, like O'Rourke, wanted to learn a trade he could carry in to the civilian workforce someday. Others, like CE2(SCW) Jay Dunlap of CBU-413 enjoy working with his hands.

"Ever since I was a kid, I've always wanted to be in construction," Dunlap said. "I get a real sense of accomplishment [to build something] and see the finished product."

The Seabees include seven ratings (builder, equipment operator, construction electrician, utilitiesman, steelworker, engineering aide and construction mechanic). After recruit training, all Seabees attend "A" school, where they learn their rate. But, Tucker said, most of their training doesn't come from sitting in a classroom or watching videos.

"The majority of our training is done on the job site," he said. "That's why we push to get people on the job site as much and as often as we can."

Tucker worked in civilian construction before joining the Navy nine years ago. What makes the Seabees enjoyable for him is the versatility and the wide variety of training he's received.

"If you're in civilian construction, and you pour concrete, that's all you do," he explained. "Since I've been with the Seabees, I've built a nursing home addition in the Dominican Republic, did roadwork in Haiti and now I'm working on a building and parking lot here in Hawaii. Plus, you learn all the sub-contracting, the electrical, plumbing and engineering that goes into the project, as well. You don't get that versatility and training [in the civilian world]."

Dunlap agrees. He is overseeing his first project at the Rainbow Bay Marina as a crew leader. In addition to his technical skills as an electrician, he's also learning supervisory skills, how to manage a budget and the logistics involved with the project. Plus, he's doing a lot more than electrical work.

"I've got dump truck licenses, I've operated heavy equipment and worked with the plumbers," Dunlap said. "It's really good to learn all the different trades."

The technical training is only one side of the equation. Seabees also learn combat and infantry training, such as operating an M-16 or M-60 machine guns, donning camouflage gear, patrolling and planning for a project in a combat zone.

"You learn something new most of the time," admitted Tucker.

Life as a Seabee is demanding and fast paced, especially for deployed Seabees. Sea duty for Seabees comes in the form of the Naval Mobile Construction Battalions. Unlike duty aboard ship, which revolves around a six-month deployment and an 18-month inport period, the Seabees' deployment cycle is a bit more hectic.

"Battalions deploy for seven months, are in homeport for seven months, then deploy again for another seven months," said BU1(SCW) Leonard Neal of CBU-413, who has deployed with a battalion during his 10-year career. "The seven months you're in [homeport], you're usually gone about a month-and-a-half doing field training, before deploying again."

"It's [battalion] a high speed pace," added Tucker, previously assigned to NMCB-5 in Port Hueneme, Calif. "In homeport, you're training and planning for the next deployment. Then, on deployment, it's construction, construction, construction."

"We're called 'the green machine' because we're always going," Tucker continued. "But, it was a lot of fun."

Neal agrees. "[Deployment] is where the great work is."

O'Rourke's time as a Seabee has taken him around the world, to places like El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Cuba, Panama and Korea. He's not only had the opportunity to use his skills as an electrician, but to teach them to others.

"We built some schoolhouses while we were in El Salvador," he said. "While we were there, we also taught the El Salvadorian engineers how we built brick walls and ran electrical."

O'Rourke also had the chance to lend a helping hand in Guatemala, where Seabees built another schoolhouse and a medical clinic.

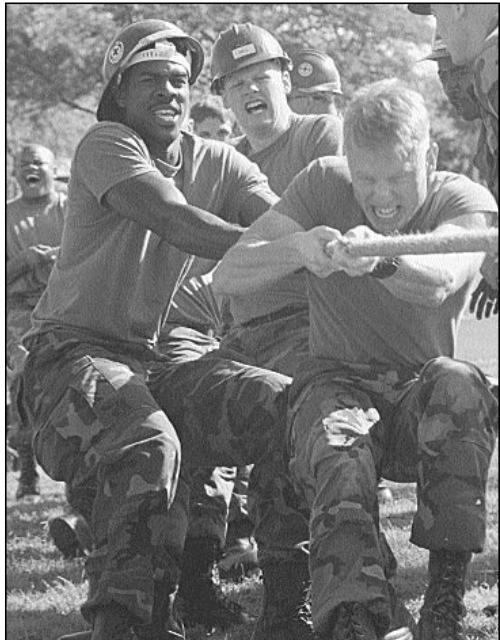
"It's great to see how much they [local nationals] appreciate what you did for them."

They build, they fight. No matter the location or the situation, the Seabees are there, getting the job done and carrying on a proud legacy. It's hard work, but ask any Seabee, and they'll tell you that being a Seabee is both rewarding and fun - a sentiment perhaps O'Rourke best summed up.

"I've had a blast."



J01 David Nagle photo



J01 David Nagle photo

CE3 Thomas Smith of CBU-413 (above) guides a load of sand into a trench at the Rainbow Bay Marina Monday.

UT3 Noel Moroney (left foreground) and EOON Sajada Jackson of NMCB-5 prove it's not "all work and no play" for the Seabees during a tug-of-war competition at the annual Seabee Olympics last Friday. According to BU1(SCW) Leonard Neal of CBU-413, the Olympics was an opportunity for local Seabees to get together and celebrate the Seabee's birthday. Other events included a five-man truck pull, tent setup, an M-16 teardown and forklift races. Naval Station's First Lieutenant division won the Olympics, with CBU-413 First Platoon and CBU-413 Third Platoon placing second and third, respectively.

Old building, new look:

NMCB-5 renovates Lockwood Hall

By J02(SW) Michelle Tuggle

THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

Seven months in, seven months out: A pretty fair assessment of life as a Navy Seabee. Like the insects by which they so pattern themselves, Sea 'bees' travel, dwell, and build in a similar fashion. When one group leaves a site, another soon acquires the workload until the job is done or until they, too, must move on.

The Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Five (NMCB-5), picking up where NMCB-4 left off, now occupies the 'Hawaiian hive' and are here to inhabit and improve their surroundings. Renovating Lockwood Hall Bachelor Officer's Quarters (BOQ) is only one of several projects the Bees of NMCB-5 have tackled.

The advance party arrived January 5. We knew that the Lockwood Hall project was one of our bigger jobs so we started immediately," recalled Chief Builder (SCW) Robert Moons, NMCB-5 Operations Chief.

Of the 12-man crew slated for the project, Moons said, "They're ready to go. These guys are turning and burning! As soon as they

get the green light to go onto another phase of this job, they're on it."

Lockwood Hall was dedicated to Vice Adm. Charles A. Lockwood Jr., during an April 11, 1958 ceremony. Deemed by colleagues as an outstanding naval officer, Lockwood served brilliantly as a submarine officer.

A plaque at the main entrance of the building serves as a reminder of Lockwood's valor and dedication to duty:

"Dedicated to Vice Admiral Charles A. Lockwood Jr., U.S. Navy. Named in honor of an outstanding Naval Officer, his brilliant submarine career will serve as a constant example of leadership and courage to all submarine men who took their ships into sea."

According to NMCB-5's Officer-In-Charge, Lt. Shawn J. Bergan, his Seabees are honored to work on the project. "Our crews take great pride in their work regardless of the size of the job. We're honored to play a role in such a historically significant renovation," said Bergan.

Though NMCB-4 started the renovation process before their turnover with NMCB-5, the brunt of the work rests in the hands of "Bergan's Bees." The job entails

removing all the plumbing, electrical, and framing structures within two decks of officer's quarters, and restructuring the rooms to provide more accommodating features.

"We're making the rooms larger, more fireproof and more secure," explained BU3 Clevon Thomas, crewmember and safety coordinator. "Our crew consists of twelve men who may have a number of things to do before the job is complete."

Crewmembers worked diligently in an apparently hollowed wing of the BOQ, drilling, securing frames and ceiling structures for each room, clearing areas for safe access. Upon completion, the new rooms will include bathrooms, kitchenettes and air conditioning.

The 51 Seabees of NMCB-5's Detail Hawaii have their hands full with projects throughout the island chain. In addition to the Lockwood Hall project, they are constructing a new locker room at Naval Security Group Activity Kunia, and a new recreational facility at the Makalapa complex. The detail will also add a new dormitory to the fire station at the Pacific Missile Range Facility, Barking Sands, Kauai.